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 6
                    IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
                        FOR THE DISTRICT OF MONTANA
 7
                             BILLINGS DIVISION
 8
      TRACY CAEKAERT and CAMILLIA MAPLEY, )
 9
                     Plaintiffs,
10
                                          ) Case No. CV 20-52-BLG-SPW
           VS.
11
      WATCHTOWER BIBLE and TRACT SOCIETY )
      OF NEW YORK, INC., WATCHTOWER
12
      BIBLE and TRACT SOCIETY OF
      PENNSYLVANIA, and
     BRUCE MAPLEY, SR.,
13
14
                     Defendants,
                                          ) Motions for Sanctions
15
      WATCHTOWER BIBLE and TRACT SOCIETY )
      of NEW YORK, INC.,
16
                 Cross-Claimant,
17
     BRUCE MAPLEY, SR.,
18
                Cross-Defendant,
19
20
     ARIANE ROWLAND and JAMIE SCHULZE, )
21
                     Plaintiffs,
                                          ) Case No. CV 20-59-BLG-SPW
           VS.
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     WATCHTOWER BIBLE and TRACT SOCIETY )
      OF NEW YORK, INC., and WATCHTOWER
23
      BIBLE and TRACT SOCIETY OF
24
     PENNSYLVANIA,
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                    Defendants.
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3	TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS Tuesday, April 5, 2022
4	9:33 a.m. to 10:44 a.m.
5	
6	BEFORE THE HONORABLE SUSAN P. WATTERS UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF MONTANA - BILLINGS DIVISION
7	
8	
9	JAMES F. BATTIN FEDERAL COURTHOUSE 2601 2nd Avenue North
10	Billings, Montana 59101
11	
12	
13	APPEARANCES
14	For the Plaintiffs: Robert L. Stepans, Esq. Ryan R. Shaffer, Esq. James C. Murnion, Esq. (Appearing via Zoom) MEYER, SHAFFER & STEPANS, PLLP
15	
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20	Also present: Jessica Yuhas, Paralegal
21	
22	
23	
24	
25	Proceedings recorded by machine shorthand Transcript produced by computer-aided transcription

1	
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20	
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MORNING SESSION, TUESDAY, APRIL 5, 2022 1 2 (Whereupon, the court convened at 9:33 a.m., with all 3 interested parties present and the following proceedings were 4 had:) 5 THE COURT: Amanda, would you please call the 6 matters on the calendar. 7 THE CLERK: Yes, Your Honor. 8 The Court has set aside this time to hear the 9 matters of CV 20-52-BLG-SPW, Caekaert vs. Watchtower Bible and 10 Tract Society of New York, Incorporated, and in Cause No. CV 20-59-BLG-SPW, Rowland vs. Watchtower Bible and Tract 11 12 Society of New York, New York, Incorporated. 13 This is the time set for a motion hearing. 14 THE COURT: Okay. We've also got Watchtower Bible 15 and Tract Society of Pennsylvania as a defendant in each of 16 those cases. 17 All right. Well, I think I know who everybody is 18 from my cheat sheet that Amanda made for me, but maybe for the 19 record we'll have counsel identify themselves. So starting 20 with counsel for the plaintiffs in both cases, if you could 21 please identify yourselves for the record. 22 MR. SHAFFER: Morning, Your Honor. Ryan Shaffer. 23 MR. STEPANS: Good morning, Your Honor. Rob Stepans 24 on behalf of plaintiffs.

THE CLERK: Are your mics on, Counsel?

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MR. STEPANS: Oh, I apologize; they're not.
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               THE CLERK: Thank you.
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               MR. STEPANS: Good morning, Your Honor. Rob Stepans
     on behalf of plaintiffs.
 4
 5
               THE COURT: Okay.
 6
               MR. MURNION: And, Your Honor, this is James Murnion
 7
     on Zoom here, just listening in, for the plaintiffs, though.
               THE COURT: Okay. And then on behalf of Watchtower
 8
9
     New York.
10
               MR. WILSON: Your Honor, Jon Wilson here on behalf
11
     of Watchtower New York.
12
               THE COURT: Okay. And then on behalf of Watchtower
13
     Pennsylvania?
14
               MR. SWEENEY: Chris Sweeney here for Pennsylvania.
15
               MR. FAGAN: Good morning, Your Honor. I'm
16
     Gerry Fagan.
17
               MR. FITZGERALD: Good morning, Your Honor.
18
     Jordan FitzGerald.
19
                THE COURT: Okay. And then I understand Jessica,
20
     the paralegal, is here, too. All right.
21
               Good morning, everybody. This is the time set for
22
     hearing on the plaintiffs' motions for sanctions. These
23
     motions -- a motion was filed in each of the two cases.
24
               THE CLERK: Sorry to interrupt, did you also make
25
     aware of who else is on Zoom, Mr. --
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1
                THE COURT: I thought -- oh, yes. Mr. Taylor,
 2
      Joel Taylor is on Zoom also.
 3
                MR.
                     TAYLOR: Good morning, Your Honor.
 4
                THE COURT: Thank you, Amanda. I apologize.
 5
                So we're here for the plaintiffs' motions for
 6
     sanctions in each of these cases and so who is going to be
 7
      taking charge for plaintiffs today?
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               MR. STEPANS: I will, if it pleases the Court, Your
 9
     Honor.
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                THE COURT: Okay. Go ahead, Mr. Stepans.
                                                           Thank
11
     you.
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               MR. STEPANS: May I use the lectern?
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               THE COURT: You may. That's perfectly fine.
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               MR. STEPANS: Your Honor, I suppose as an initial
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     matter I would -- plaintiffs filed a motion to supplement.
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     Defendants both objected, but I don't believe I've seen any
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     briefing on that, so I don't know if the Court wants me to
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      speak to that motion or speak to the contents of what
     plaintiff was attempting to supplement the record with, but I
19
20
      thought I would introduce that topic.
21
                THE COURT: Thank you for reminding me about that.
22
               Mr. Wilson, so on behalf of Watchtower New York,
23
     what is the basis of your objection?
24
               MR. WILSON: Thank you, Your Honor.
25
               The basis of that objection is that the affidavit in
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issue was dealing with other different issues that are at issue in this case and whether the statements in the affidavit do not have any applicability to the present matter, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Okay. And on behalf of Watchtower Pennsylvania, what is the basis of your objection?

MR. SWEENEY: Thank you, Judge.

We would echo the comments from New York, and we will discuss the substance of that affidavit during our argument to the extent the Court wants us to. I would also point out that the affidavit is from a representative from the New York corporation, and we're here for a motion for sanctions against the Pennsylvania corporation.

So to Mr. Wilson's point I do not believe it is applicable, and it was late filed. We have not had a chance to respond.

THE COURT: Okay. Well, for purposes of this hearing, I'm going to grant the motion to supplement the record, and counsel can flesh out their objections or respond to the arguments that -- and with that I mean defense counsel -- the plaintiffs' counsel makes this morning.

And, of course, I'll take into consideration the arguments that may go to the weight of the affidavit as it pertains to these motions for sanctions.

So you may proceed, Mr. Stepans.

MR. STEPANS: Thank you, Your Honor.

Your Honor, it is -- as it pertains to the

Don Adams' supplement and the affidavit, I would suggest that
the Court that the very reasons that the defendant
corporations are objecting are the reason that the Court
should, in fact, consider this affidavit. It's extremely
telling that the affidavit was filed for a different purpose
and that is the substance of our argument.

In 1986, Don Adams, who is holding himself out as a representative of the WTNY corporation, submits this affidavit and in it makes very specific contentions about the hierarchal structure of -- in the place in which these two defendant corporations hold.

So in 1986, what Mr. Adams did, and I think the contents of that affidavit are very telling, Your Honor, because it's several things. Number one, Mr. Adams makes assertions that are particular to both WTNY and WTPA and, in fact, if you look at page -- I point the Court's attention -- this is document 117, page 3 of 7 in the document.

And, Your Honor, what's really important about this affidavit, first of all, it is from the relevant time period, 1986; and the second part is that Mr. Adams not only makes assertions by way of affidavit that support plaintiffs' contention that during the relevant time period WTPA was, in fact, involved in a number of things that would bring them

under the purview of this Court for purposes of jurisdiction.

But it's not only that, Your Honor, what he does is point to specific publications. Publications that we have submitted to this Court. And what Mr. Adams does is pull quotes from them directly in furtherance of explaining that hierarchal organization to the Court in Bonham County [sic], Texas.

So it was certainly a different situation, and certainly there was a different set of assertions that were being made to the Court in that instance compared to what are being made in this particular case.

So I'd ask the Court to consider when defendant corporation WTPA says, "Well, we withdrew our motion because these are archaic texts. They are awkwardly worded. They build confusion." But in 1986, Don Adams in an affidavit is quoting verbatim from those same texts in order to tell the court this is a hierarchal organization with WTPA at the top. "Those operating under us do not have the sovereignty or authority to do the things that they are saying."

So when they want to hold on to a Kingdom Hall in 1986, those assertions pointing to those documents are in no way awkward, clumsy, poorly written, or causing confusion; they are instead being asserted for the certain specific purpose of having the Court recognize that hierarchal structure and cement WTPA's ability to maintain control over

that physical property because of the control that they had over the congregations.

As I indicated, Your Honor, this page 3 of 7 on document 117, which is plaintiffs' supplement -- motion to supplement on the sanctions, we pulled two quotes from this affidavit. Those quotes, Your Honor, if we were to pull -- if you go to the next page, page 4, those quotes are pulled directly from the material -- let's see here, "This is organized to accomplish our ministry."

I'm not sure if this has been filed, but at any rate, Your Honor, this -- the document "Organized to Accomplish Our Ministry," which was published by WTPA, indicates the use of religious corporations -- excuse me. The quote that Don Adams pulls is from that document.

So then now it's awkwardly worded, and the reason they pulled their jurisdictional motion is because it might be too confusing for us. I submit to you, Your Honor, this is a critical piece of information. There is no question that this affidavit was submitted and the purposes for which it was submitted were different. So --

THE COURT: Can you tell me, in a nutshell, what was that case about?

MR. STEPANS: My understanding, Your Honor, was that there was a congregation in Bonham County, Texas, that was attempting to essentially assert control over their -- over

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that Kingdom Hall. And my understanding is that what they were trying to -- there was a power play by a congregation saying these corporations can't -- you know, they aren't in charge of this.

So when WTNY and WTPA came back and said, "No, we are in control" -- this is a piece of property, basically, so a Kingdom Hall is the church and the real estate they own around it. When this local congregation tried to assert itself as having dominion over that, making assertions that were not in line with WTPA and WTNY.

Those defendant corporations then said, "No, we're in charge of all of it, and here's how you know: These publications that we put out in the world, they say exactly what it is. They say we are at the top and we run the show, and under us is these 95 branches, and we direct them."

Is that -- that's about as much as I know, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Okay. That's in some context for me.

MR. STEPANS: Your Honor, the second thing, I guess, I should address at the front end, and I can do more comparison, but I think that what I'd ask -- I'll come back to the Don Adams' affidavit.

Let's go to WTPA's response, Your Honor. I do have to address this because we identified an incorrect document, and I want to make sure that I -- we did indicate in our

brief, our reply brief, that we had indicated an incorrect document.

So our opening brief we were talking about the Kingdom Ministry coursebook, and WTPA is correct, I mean they took a lot of umbrage about it, but it was -- they are correct. That is not a -- the actual document was the source and the substance of a motion to compel that this Court heard previously.

And that document is the WTPA's 1972 Organization

For Kingdom-Preaching and Disciple-Making. So I apologize to
the Court for making that mistake, but the document in
question, just to refresh the Court's recollection as it
pertains to that motion to compel, James Rowland was deposed
in this case early on, and Mr. Rowland identified the 1972
Organization for Kingdom-Preaching and Disciple-Making as
containing the information that guided and directed him as an
elder in the Hardin congregation during his time there.

And it wasn't until after Mr. Rowland identified that and plaintiff was able to secure it through other means outside of discovery that WTPA actually turned it over. Why that's important, Your Honor, is that at the inception of this case WTPA asked this Court to do two things; they asked the Court to dismiss the case against them entirely and to prohibit any discovery from being done at all into that question.

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In support of those two aims, WTPA submitted two items to Your Honor, and those are the affidavits of Mr. Brumley. It's on the strength of those two affidavits, and not on anything else, that WTPA asked this Court to dismiss the case outright and to prevent plaintiffs from doing any discovery.

Subsequent to that, plaintiffs asked for a document by name in discovery. It was not turned over. And that is this WTPA's 1972 Organization for Kingdom-Preaching and Disciple-Making. In a situation like this, Your Honor, where we're forced to play hide-and-seek, and we have to rely on the assertions from these defendant corporations, it's almost impossible to understand how submitting the request to dismiss these cases, and then dragging us through 18 months where they are fighting the discovery, not participating, taking positions that are contrary to their own literature -- and to be honest, Your Honor, I understand the Rule 11 situation as -- you know, we couldn't actually put together a Rule 11 letter because we didn't have enough information until October. So we had been pulled through it for about a year and a half, asking they dismiss it, asking for the documents, and to no avail.

That's why we're here, because I think we lose track a little bit of the fact that, you know, my clients, obviously this is pretty delayed justice for them. And fortunately the

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opportunity to come bring these cases has been presented.
                                                          But
here we are, a year and a half, and all we got through is
jurisdictional discovery only to have them dismiss it
summarily without adequate explanation to the Court as to why
the assertions were being made all along by WTPA.
          In that context, Your Honor, I guess I'd like to
point the Court to -- back to those documents and those
assertions that WTPA made at the front end. So this is
document 18, and this is defendants' reply brief in support of
motion to dismiss for lack of jurisdiction, WTPA page 14 of
17. Okay. And this WTPA says, quote, starting --
         THE COURT: I'm sorry to interrupt. What
document -- are you talking about a CM/ECF document?
         MR. STEPANS: Yes, Your Honor. I'm sorry.
the defendants' reply brief in support of motion to dismiss,
document 18 -- oh, I apologize. It is --
         THE COURT: In which case?
         MR. STEPANS: Let me make sure I've got the right
one. This looks like it's filed in the Caekaert case, Your
Honor. Let me make sure. Oh, no, excuse me. This is
Rowland; document 18 in Rowland.
          THE COURT: Okay. I have Caekaert up, so give me
just a second.
         MR. STEPANS: Okay.
         THE COURT: Okay. I've got it. So direct me to
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what you're talking about specifically.

MR. STEPANS: Thank you, Your Honor.

So this is page 14 of 17, and it is the first full paragraph on that, starting with -- "Starting with plaintiffs' assertion, jurisdictional discovery is necessary to explore the full extent of WTPA's involvement," et cetera. WTPA says this: "The Brumley affidavit affirmatively states that WTPA has no contact with congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses located in Montana. Allowing jurisdictional discovery on that basis would not uncover anything that is already known."

So if we look back to Mr. Brumley's affidavit, Your Honor, the -- this is document 14.1.

THE COURT: Yes. I actually have a hard copy of it here.

MR. STEPANS: Okay. And I would ask the Court to -I'd point the Court's attention to paragraph 11 and paragraphs
14 through 16. Those are affirmative assertions and
representations to this Court. The commentary from WTPA now
is that those are not sanctionable because they are
technically true.

The contents of that affidavit, Your Honor, if they are "technically true" and then omit all of the important facts, and the corporation asked the Court to dismiss it on that basis, as we indicated in our briefing, it's either unbelievably reckless that WTPA wouldn't go into its own

documents and find the materials that we've submitted, including -- and I'll just run through this -- document 96.1, the Watchtower April 1, 1971, indicates that it is published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania.

Document 96-1 at 945, the Watchtower,

September 1, 1987, published by Watchtower Bible and Tract

Society Pennsylvania. Document 96-1 at 295, the Kingdom

Ministry School Course 1972, compiled and published by the

Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania.

Document 96-1 at 757, the 1975 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses, corporate publishers, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania.

The defendant wasn't trying to get the Court to do something else. The defendant was trying to get the Court on the strength of Mr. Brumley to dismiss the case outright on jurisdictional grounds and not allow any discovery. As a result, that's either bad faith or it's reckless, and in either case, plaintiffs — any plaintiffs — and, you know, my clients are no exceptions to that — should not be subject to these kind of games in discovery.

We should be already probably getting ready for trial. We should have gone through the discovery by now. And I would submit to the Court that it wasn't for lack of trying on the plaintiffs' part. Where we dug up some of this information that should have been provided to us probably in

initial discovery, the efforts that we made, I think there 1 2 were seven or eight letters back and forth over the period of 3 time leading up to the last sanctions hearing that we had. 4 So subject to any questions from Your Honor, I think 5 our briefing covers the rest of it, but I wanted to cover 6 those couple items. And subject to any questions, Your Honor, 7 I quess I'd reserve just a little bit of time to reply if it 8 would be okay. THE COURT: Sure. And I don't have any questions of 9 10 you right now. 11 MR. STEPANS: Thank you, Your Honor. 12 THE COURT: And okay. Mr. Sweeney, you are 13 representing WTPA. You may go ahead. 14 MR. SWEENEY: Thank you, Judge. 15 As an initial matter, Mr. Stepans, I believe, was 16 referring to the Rowland case. I probably should have called 17 him. My references are going to be to the documents in the 18 Caekaert case. So if you need a second to switch over to 19 that, my apologies for any inconvenience there. 20 THE COURT: That's okay. Let me get back to 21 Caekaert. All right. I'm back at the Caekaert case. 22 MR. SWEENEY: Thank you, Judge. 23 I want to spend some time this morning going through what the plaintiffs actually argued in both their opening 24

brief as well as their reply. And some of this is -- was

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covered in our response, but given the gravity of the situation, I think it's important that we cover these points in detail.

And it's going to become clear, if it hasn't already from the briefing, that the motion for sanctions has absolutely no merit, because there has been no attempt to trick the Court, conceal facts, be deceptive, and all of the other words that the plaintiffs used to describe the Pennsylvania corporation's manner in which they have handled the motion to dismiss.

So I want to take a little time to discuss what they actually argued in their motion. As Mr. Stepans pointed out, and as the Court is aware, in support of the motion to dismiss for lack of personal jurisdiction, the Pennsylvania corporation submitted two affidavits from Mr. Brumley. And the plaintiffs' claim seems to be that the affidavits contain a bunch of misrepresentations.

And in making this argument in their brief, the plaintiffs completely misinterpret -- not even misinterpret -- they misquote and misrepresent what Mr. Brumley actually said in his affidavits, and I think it's important to discuss what he said.

Now, plaintiffs' argument, the first argument they have, with respect to Brumley's affidavit, plaintiffs claim that he falsely asserted that WTPA does not publish

copyrighted material. Then the plaintiffs point to a document, which is 21-1 in the Caekaert matter, which is a printout of a website, to argue that WTPA does, in fact, publish copyrighted material, and they are, therefore, lying in Mr. Brumley's affidavit.

Here's the problem with that argument. What Brumley actually testified to was that WTPA does not author the substantive content or print hard copies of the books, magazines, brochures, and tracts referred to above. On the contrary, the copyrighted materials are published by codefendant Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, a separate corporation.

That's what Mr. Brumley actually said in his affidavit. Document 21-1, which is the website states that WTPA is, quote, used by Jehovah's Witnesses to support their worldwide work, which includes publishing Bibles and Bible-based literature. Plaintiffs have read this incorrectly to believe that it states that the Pennsylvania corporation is publishing the Bibles and Bible-based literature and, therefore, is lying.

The fact is this says "Jehovah's Witnesses and their worldwide work that includes publishing Bibles and Bible-based literature." Brumley submitted his second affidavit and cleared this up. In his second affidavit, which was document 26, he stated, quote, WTPA and Jehovah's Witnesses are not one

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in the same, and the support WTPA provides to Jehovah's Witnesses includes owning the copyright to the Bible and other Bible-based materials and funding international humanitarian relief matters.

This reference to the website that talks about the Jehovah's worldwide work in publishing Bibles is not stating that Pennsylvania publishes the Bibles and does not contradict Philip Brumley's affidavit whatsoever. So their first argument is flat wrong.

We also pointed this out in our brief, and I would note that in the plaintiffs' reply, they seemed to have abandoned that argument. They make no mention of it, nor do they address our counterargument that what this website said is not contradictory to Mr. Brumley's argument. That seemed to be abandoned because it was not brought up in the reply.

Plaintiffs then move on to point to two letters, which are document 21-3 and 21-4. And plaintiffs again misrepresent Brumley's testimony in its affidavits to claim plaintiffs' version of Brumley's testimony is that Brumley asserted that "WTPA does nothing more than passively hold copyrights and provide international humanitarian aid." That's not what Brumley said. These affidavits are short. It's not hard to find what he actually said.

Plaintiffs then point to some letters to try to convince the Court that Brumley was lying. Here is what

Brumley actually said: "WTPA exists to provide certain business needs of Jehovah's Witnesses, including, among other things, holding copyright to books, magazines, songs, and videos. It also provides international humanitarian aid to communities after natural disasters."

In his affidavit, Mr. Brumley provided examples of work that WTPA does. He did not purport to provide an exhaustive list of what WTPA does. Indeed he says they -- WTPA does these things, among other things. And I'm going to talk in a second what plaintiffs should have done when they read his affidavit.

It's important to note, though, that the plaintiffs' request for sanctions is continually based on their misrepresentation of Mr. Brumley's testimony in his affidavit. They go on to cite a letter, which is 21-3 in Caekaert, to argue that he is not telling the truth.

This is a letter from 1970 from WTPA's past president, who I understand is now deceased, to an individual in New York explaining that another person in New York was not fit to be associated with the Bethal family. This was an internal communication. It wasn't sent to Montana, has nothing to do with personal jurisdiction in Montana, and has — in no way contradicts what Mr. Brumley said.

They similarly cite 21-4 to support their argument.

This is a May 2002 letter from the Pennsylvania corporation to

the BBC television network regarding how Jehovah's Witnesses handle sex abuse matters. Once again, I don't know why this is cited, but nothing in this contradicts what Mr. Brumley said in his affidavit nor does it do anything to establish personal jurisdiction in Montana.

And then, briefly, they cite five more letters, which I'll touch on just very briefly, to claim that Mr. Brumley is lying, and they are 29-1 through 29-5. In their argument, they claim that they found additional evidence to prove that WTPA was lying and to prove that WTPA is incorrect when it states that it does nothing more than hold copyrights and provide humanitarian aid.

Once again, WTPA and Mr. Brumley have not taken the position that the only thing they do is hold copyright and provide humanitarian aid. That is plaintiffs' mischaracterization of Mr. Brumley's testimony. I've read for the Court what he actually said.

Document 29-1 is a letter from a writing committee that was signed by WTPA and was sent to Australia. 29-2 is a letter from WTPA's office in London to elders in England. 29-3 is a 1995 letter that was sent to all elders in the United States that concerns applying for tuition-free Bible missionary in New York.

29-4 was another letter in England from 1995. And 29-5 is some court filing relating to the Holocaust in

retaining -- in gaining compensation for Jehovah's Witnesses.

Beyond me why these things are cited, but plaintiffs argue
that all of these documents we just went through show that

Mr. Brumley is lying. And it doesn't take a very close
examination to show that nothing in these documents
contradicts what Mr. Brumley said in his affidavits.

Now, in their reply, the plaintiffs again double down, and they just say Mr. Brumley's claims -- his testimony is false. We've explained in our response why that's not true. They double down, they say it's false, they say it's misleading. Then they acknowledge that it's technically true, but they state that it was intentionally crafted to convince the Court of something that was never true and "to trick the Court" -- those are the words they use in their brief. That's not the case because there is nothing in that affidavit that's inaccurate. There is nothing in that affidavit that's untrue.

We have a lot of argument from plaintiffs, but no evidence to contradict what Mr. Brumley said in his affidavit. It should also be pointed out, and this cannot be lost on the Court, if the plaintiffs wanted more information from Mr. Brumley, other than the two, two-page affidavits he submitted, they should have deposed him.

In fact, in March of 2021, plaintiffs were seeking to do just that. By then his two affidavits had been filed, everybody knew what they had said, and plaintiffs had ample

opportunity to depose him to get any clarification they wanted. And, in fact, in September of 2021, we weren't counsel for the Pennsylvania corporation, but I understand a deposition for Mr. Brumley was actually noticed by the plaintiffs and then unilaterally cancelled by the plaintiffs. They had ample opportunity to clarify anything in his affidavit and they chose not to.

They seem to argue -- plaintiffs seem to argue that if an opposing affidavit does not contain facts that are good for them, then the affidavit is subject to sanctions as is the author.

The purpose of an affidavit is to set forth true facts. It is not meant to be an exhaustive recitation of all facts the author of the affidavit knows or an exhaustive list of information the plaintiff wants to know. That is what depositions are for.

THE COURT: Right. But in the context of WTPA's motion to dismiss for lack of jurisdiction, WTPA was relying primarily, if not solely, on Brumley's affidavits without any clarification or supplementation that would be provided to the Court. The Court obviously doesn't go to depositions, so -- I haven't mischaracterized that, have I?

MR. SWEENEY: No. And Pennsylvania's position is that there would be nothing learned during a deposition that would have contradicted or supported an objection to the

motion to dismiss. The affidavit was sufficient. The point I'm making is, based on plaintiffs' argument that it was misleading and trickery and deceiving because it was incomplete, they could have certainly talked to Mr. Brumley and gotten more information from him. Our position is, even if they had done that, the arguments to dismiss for lack of personal jurisdiction would still be as strong, but they chose not to do so.

Now, at the beginning of Mr. Stepans' argument, he pointed to a document that was incorrect in his opening brief and acknowledged that it was the wrong document, and I think he said "We've take a lot of umbrage over that." And I want to touch on that just briefly, because it gets into the document they actually meant, according to them.

They refer to, in their opening brief, which they admit was the wrong document, a 1990 -- 1972 Kingdom Ministries School Course Book. And they call this "A particularly egregious example of WTPA's hiding evidence," when in fact WTPA had produced that. It was the first document they produced in November 2020, plaintiffs had it all along.

But I bring this up because this is a perfect example of, frankly, the sloppy and unsubstantiated allegations that the plaintiffs are levying against the Pennsylvania corporation in support of their motions for

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sanctions. These arguments are not thought through. And so in their reply, they change tactics and instead point to a 1972 "Organization for Kingdom-Preaching and Disciple-Making." What Mr. Stepans did not tell you when he explained to you that WTPA wouldn't produce the document, what Mr. Stepans didn't tell you was that plaintiffs already had it. Plaintiffs produced it in January of 2021, before Mr. Rowland was deposed, and then after the deposition it was produced back to them by the Pennsylvania corporation. The Court will recall that as part of the jurisdictional discovery, there was an order from the Court limiting discovery about the corporate relationship from 1973 13 to either 1992 or 1995. This book was obviously outside of that window. So there was a disagreement as to whether this document was produced. But the important part here, the plaintiffs already had it, and ultimately it was produced by the Pennsylvania corporation anyway so it was produced twice, and that was not 19 acknowledged to you by the plaintiffs. THE COURT: Well, they did say they had it before the Rowland deposition but not from WTPA. MR. SWEENEY: Right, they did collect it. Okay. And if they said that, my apologies. 23 THE COURT: They did say that. MR. SWEENEY: I just wanted to be clear, that they

had it, there's been no prejudice to them, and, of course, the reasonable and valid reason why it wasn't produced was because of the Court's order that Pennsylvania understood to believe that this document was outside of the discovery window.

THE COURT: So what -- why -- when was this organization document? When was that published?

MR. SWEENEY: 1972 is my understanding.

THE COURT: Okay. So the year before the window?

MR. SWEENEY: Correct. And I'm not really sure about the importance of this book anyways. My understanding is this book went to all Jehovah's Witnesses to acquaint them with how congregations work. It was disseminated by the New York corporation, not the Pennsylvania corporation. It plainly states on the front of it that PA, the Pennsylvania corporation holds the copyright, but New York published this.

It's not clear why we are even talking about that book because there is nothing in that that either contradicts Mr. Brumley's testimony or that really establishes personal -- I don't see how there is a connection between the personal jurisdiction of Pennsylvania and this book.

Now, let's keep in mind what we're doing here, the plaintiffs are asking for sanctions against both Mr. Brumley and Mr. Taylor. They throw Mr. Taylor in the mix, and I'm not sure why. The way I understand their argument, he was an attorney, he should have recognized that Brumley's affidavit

was full of lies and, as an attorney, should have corrected them. As I've spent time discussing and I argued in our response, there is nothing inaccurate in Mr. Brumley's affidavit.

But Mr. Taylor's actions in this matter have been extremely limited. He appeared pro hac, he appeared at the deposition, and he's appearing at this hearing. In their briefs, they seem to argue that because Mr. Taylor was involved in some other cases involving the New York corporation, he should have taken that knowledge and corrected misstatements in Brumley's affidavits. We have covered this; there was no misstatements.

But the other lawsuits didn't involve WTPA. They didn't involve Mr. Brumley. And the only one that involved Mr. Taylor was the <u>Nunez</u> case. Plaintiffs have failed to establish how Mr. Taylor's involvement in another case representing another party is a basis for sanctions in this case, especially since they have been unable to identify any sanctionable conduct in the first instance. So we're scratching our head as to Mr. Taylor, because that's our position with respect to him.

Now, this Don Adams' affidavit -- Judge, at the beginning of this, I understand you granted the motion to supplement, and I think I may have heard you say that we can flesh out our objections later. Did you want me to state our

objections, even though you've already granted it, or should I just talk about the substance?

THE COURT: Well, I thought if you wanted to make further argument on your objection for purposes of the record, you could or we can just -- I have granted the motion and so if you wish to just get into the substance, you can do that, too.

MR. SWEENEY: Well, let me just make our record then. So our objection, of course, it was late filed. We have not had an opportunity to respond to it. We have not had an opportunity to talk to Mr. Adams -- I don't even know if Mr. Adams is alive. And Mr. Adams was, as he testified in his affidavit, a representative of the New York corporation, not the Pennsylvania corporation.

Nowhere in his affidavit does he claim to have personal knowledge of the Pennsylvania's corporation business or how it does business. And we don't even know what the purpose of that affidavit was. Mr. Stepans' understanding of the case is similar to mine, it was 40 years ago almost.

So we aren't all sure even what the case was about. We don't even know what the purpose of the affidavit was. So to cherry-pick an affidavit from somebody we don't have a chance to talk to and was late filed we believe is improper and should not be considered by the Court.

Now as to the substance of Mr. Adams' affidavit, I

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don't see how that pertains to the motion to dismiss for lack of personal jurisdiction. He, again, claims that the church is hierarchal, but there is no legal relationship between the New York corporation and the Pennsylvania corporation.

We've produced all the corporate records going back to the 80s. There's no legal relationship between the two. So it's not clear how Mr. Adams' affidavit in a Texas case somehow shows that Pennsylvania corporation is subject to personal jurisdiction in Montana.

So all we have to say about that is that it seems completely irrelevant and other than our objections, we'll leave it at that.

THE COURT: Okay.

MR. SWEENEY: I want to talk about the law for a minute. In particular, I want to start with Rule 11. So it's clear that WTPA withdrew its motion to dismiss and took advantage of the safe harbor provision of Rule 11.

Last fall the plaintiff sent a letter to the Pennsylvania corporation and threatened sanctions under Rule 11, specifically under Rule 11, if the motion was not withdrawn. They invoked the 21-day safe harbor provision.

That safe harbor provision provides that a motion for sanctions cannot be filed under Rule 11 if the challenged filing is withdrawn within 21 days after being provided notice of the intended motion for sanctions. And as we pointed out

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in our brief, the advisory committee states the safe harbor protects a party against a motion for sanctions if the challenged paper is withdrawn.

Now, plaintiffs' counsel specifically said they were going to file a motion for Rule 11 sanctions if the motion to dismiss was not withdrawn. Relying on plaintiffs' representations and the safe harbor rule, Pennsylvania corporation did withdraw the motion. This was not an admission that the motion was without merit.

Pennsylvania corporation believes the motion had merit. They have good-faith arguments that they are not subject to jurisdiction in Montana; however, when they were faced with an uncertain ruling on that motion, as well as a threatened Rule 11 motion for sanctions, the decision was made to withdraw the motion and move forward on the merits.

And they did so, knowing that they would be -Pennsylvania corporation would be protected from sanctions
under Rule 11 which was as represented by the plaintiffs.

Then as soon as that motion was -- as soon as the motion to
dismiss was withdrawn, the plaintiffs filed a motion for
sanctions anyways under 28 U.S.C. 1927 and the Court's
inherent power to sanction.

Their Rule 11 threat was simply a Trojan horse to trick Pennsylvania corporation to withdraw the motion and ask for sanctions anyways. They concealed they were going to do

that. When they asked for Rule 11 sanctions or told

Pennsylvania they were going to do that, there's no mention

that a motion for sanctions would be filed regardless whether

the safe harbor provision was utilized.

So they allowed the Pennsylvania corporation to withdraw the motion, and then they sprung their motion for sanctions on them anyways. And the basis for the sanctions they now seek are exactly the same as they claimed they were going to seek under Rule 11. It's not -- it's bad faith to invoke Rule 11, let somebody withdraw a motion, and file a motion for sanctions anyway, and the Court should not tolerate this.

Frankly, it would defeat the safe harbor provision. Rule 11 allows parties to withdraw challenged papers that may run afowl of the rule by giving them the protection of the safe harbor. The Ninth Circuit says this must be strictly followed. It's very simple. Why would a party ever withdraw a challenged paper under Rule 11 if they were going to face sanctions anyways?

Especially, as the plaintiffs have done here, the withdrawal of the motion is going to be used to support a request for sanctions later. And that's what the plaintiffs have done here. They said, "Withdraw your motion to dismiss or file Rule 11." We said, "All right. We'll take advantage of the safe harbor."

We withdraw. They filed the motion for sanctions anyways, and then argue the fact that we withdrew the motion as evidence that the motion didn't have merit in the first place. That would completely defeat Rule 11 safe harbor, if a party can invoke it and be sanctioned for it anyways as well as using the withdrawal of the motion to support the motion for sanctions under 1927 or the Court's inherent powers. The safe harbor was utilized. That should be the end of the question. And on that basis alone, the motion for sanctions should be denied.

Now, the plaintiffs also make the argument that Mr. Brumley and Mr. Taylor should not get the benefits of the safe harbor. And the language of Rule 11 defeats this argument. Rule 11 applies to those who present to the Court a pleading, written motion, or other paper, or someone who later advocates for one of those things.

Obviously, Mr. Brumley signed an affidavit, and that's a large part of the plaintiffs' allegations. With respect to Mr. Taylor, they argue that he advocated for it by not correcting it. Rule 11 doesn't just apply to those who sign papers, and neither does the safe harbor.

Plaintiffs seem to argue that there is a group of attorneys that can be sanctioned under Rule 11 but aren't entitled to the protection of the safe harbor, and that's obviously not the case. They threatened sanctions against

Mr. Brumley and Mr. Taylor under Rule 11, they invoked that process, and Mr. Brumley and Mr. Taylor are likewise entitled to the safe harbor of Rule 11.

Now, with respect to the Court's inherent power to sanction as well as 1927, the plaintiffs hope the Court ignores the safe harbor, Rule 11, and just sanctions them anyway, but neither of those are applicable. The standard for sanctions under both the Court's inherent power and 1927 are similar. The Ninth Circuit has said that sanctions may be awarded when a party is acting in bad faith, vexatiously, wantonly or oppressive reasons.

Under 1927 an attorney may be sanctioned if the attorney multiples proceedings unreasonably and vexatiously. Both essentially require a finding of bad faith, and bad faith is warranted or found when an attorney knowingly or recklessly raises a frivolous argument or argues a meritorious claim for the purposes of harassing an opponent. Neither are the case -- neither is the case here.

Pennsylvania corporation filed a motion to dismiss.

It's true that they objected to jurisdictional discovery, but

I'm sure as this Court knows, and I think all the attorneys in
the room know too, it is common and probably usually the case
that when jurisdictional discovery is sought, the opposing
party objects to such request.

Objecting to jurisdictional discovery is not bad

faith. Similarly, as we have spent some time this morning discussing and as is in our brief, plaintiffs have not pointed to anything that Pennsylvania corporation has stated that is inaccurate, untrue, misleading, deceiving, or trying to trick the Court.

The bottom line is, Your Honor, when it comes back to the Brumley affidavit, which seems to have been the thrust of the argument here, the plaintiffs chose not to depose him. And had they wanted clarification of what he said, they certainly could have done that and supplemented their record, and they chose not to do so.

Mr. Brumley has not said anything untrue.

Mr. Taylor certainly hasn't said anything that's untrue.

Pennsylvania corporation has not acted in bad faith

whatsoever. And so we would submit that the motion for

sanctions should be denied at a minimum because the safe

harbor Provision of Rule 11 was complied with, but even if the

Court were to get beyond that, there is no bad faith by

Pennsylvania corporation. The motion to dismiss was made in

good faith, and the motions for sanctions should be denied.

THE COURT: Thank you, Mr. Sweeney.

And I assume, Mr. Wilson, you're just here representing your client; you don't have anything to argue particularly.

MR. WILSON: Correct, Your Honor.

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THE COURT: Okay. Thank you.
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               Mr. Stepans, you may rebut.
               MR. STEPANS: Thank you, Your Honor.
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               MR. WILSON: Your Honor, sorry to interrupt. It
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     looks like maybe Joel has something to say.
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                THE COURT: Okay. Well, I'll let him speak before
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     you rebut, Mr. Stepans.
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               MR. STEPANS: Sure.
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                THE COURT: Go ahead, Mr. Taylor.
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                THE CLERK: Mr. Taylor, do you have something to say
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     to the Court?
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               MR. TAYLOR: We lost audio for a second at the
     speaker lectern but I can hear you fine.
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                THE CLERK: Okav.
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                THE COURT: Okay. So is that just what you wanted
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     to tell us, Mr. Taylor, what that you'd lost audio?
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               MR. TAYLOR: Yes, Your Honor. Of course if the
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     Court has any questions for me, I'm available to answer them
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     as the Court wishes also.
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                THE COURT: Okay. Thank you. I don't have any
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     questions of you at this time.
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               Mr. Stepans.
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               MR. STEPANS: Thank you, Your Honor.
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                Your Honor, on the publishing as it pertains to the
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     affidavit of Mr. Brumley, so if we go back to Mr. Brumley's
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1 affidavit, this is, let's see, paragraphs 14, 15, and 16.

THE COURT: And that's document 14-1, correct?

MR. STEPANS: That is correct, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Okay.

MR. STEPANS: Those three, in particular No. 15,
"WTPA does not author the substantive content or print hard
copies of the books, magazines, brochures, and tracts referred
to above." So, I mean, I did not concede that this was
technically true.

Defendants are saying it's technically true. I'm saying it could technically be true that that at this moment in time is accurate, but that it has nothing to do with the substance and contents of this case.

So if that's just an informative piece of information that they would like to give to the Court that has no bearing whatsoever on the question of jurisdiction as it pertains to the facts that are present in this case, I submit to you, Your Honor, that that is bad faith. There is no other reason to submit it to you.

The Brumley affidavit -- let's see, so once again, document 14-1, and this is paragraph 13, "WTPA exists to provide certain business needs of Jehovah's Witnesses including, among other things, holding copyrights, et cetera," and then it goes on to explain. What does that have to do with this case?

If we're supposed to go depose Mr. Brumley and find out the nature of all those things, why are they submitting that to you, Your Honor, if not to tell you that WTPA doesn't do what we're saying, it does something else.

Mr. Brumley's affidavit, paragraph 10, "WTPA has no contact with congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses located in Montana." If we could go back to the documents I referenced, which I didn't hear Mr. Sweeney refer to, and those are documents 96-1 that I read out loud.

Each one of those indicates that those are published by WTPA. By extrapolation, the assertion is made that these materials are used and disseminated in order to provide direction to the congregants and the elders. That's the assertion that has been made, that they go out worldwide.

I submit to you, Your Honor, that when Mr. Brumley says that, quote, WTPA has no contact with congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses located in Montana, that is not an accurate statement based on the materials that we have, the documents that indicate unequivocally that WTPA published them straight up, and those are 96.1 that I referred to.

Document 96.1 at 11 -12 is WTPA's articles of incorporation as amended in 1945. Those articles appear to still be in play and certainly they comport with what Mr. Adams said in 1986. In the articles of incorporation, and I'll quote just a few, Your Honor, because I think this is

pretty important language in the context of Mr. Brumley's affidavit:

"The purposes of this society are to act as the servant legal worldwide governing agency for the body of Christian persons known as Jehovah's Witnesses." Goes on to many other things, including "to print and distribute Bibles and to disseminate Bible truths in various languages by means of making and publishing literature containing information in common explaining Bible truths and prophecies. To authorize and appoint agents, servants, employees, teachers, instructors, evangelists, missionaries" -- okay.

We go on -- let's see, "To establish and maintain private Bible schools and classes, to provide and maintain homes, places, and buildings for gratuitous housing of such students, lecturers, teachers, ministers. To support, maintain, and send out to various parts of the world Christian missionaries, teachers, and instructors in the bible and Bible literature." So they do all of these things; and Mr. Brumley says they basically do nothing, they just hold on to the copyrights.

Again, Your Honor, I would go back to reckless or bad faith. I want to be honest, I had no hope that this motion would be pulled out under Rule 11, but I don't know what to do other than come to the Court and ask for sanctions in this situation, Your Honor.

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As we laid out in our brief, where two affidavits are filed, and it is on the strength of those affidavits -not some other explanation, not some other extenuating circumstances, not some additional information -- it's on the basis of the assertions in that that they ask to be dismissed outright and for us not to do any discovery. The 1972 document, if the Court recalls, and Mr. Sweeney's firm was not in the case at that point in time, but if you remember, we held a motion to compel hearing. evidence was clear that the 1972 document was, in fact, being used well beyond 1973, into the 80s, in the Hardin congregation. By all accounts there was not a new edition that was turned out in '73 or '74 and so that was the document that was in play at that point in time in Hardin, and it fell within that timeframe. Your Honor, going back to Mr. Adams' affidavit, this -- and so Mr. Adams' affidavit in our motion to supplement, if you would -- if I could point the Court's attention to paragraph 6. THE COURT: Of the affidavit or your motion? MR. STEPANS: Of the affidavit, Your Honor, I'm sorry. THE COURT: Okay. I'm there. MR. STEPANS: Okay. "To implement their decisions

the governing body uses a hierarchal organization together with corporate entities when appropriate to accomplish it's worldwide work of teaching and declaring the good news," et cetera, et cetera.

"The principal corporation used by the governing body is the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania." Paragraph 7, under the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania the governing body directs 95 branches through branch committees that report their progress to the governing body and implement the directives in a uniform manner.

Here the cite is very important, Your Honor. He cites to "see organized to accomplish our ministry, pages 26 and 27." I'll go to those. "This is organized to accomplish our ministry." It is a WTPA document, Bates 028731 through 028954. Take the Court to page 26, so this was -- 26 and 27. This is what Mr. Adams cites to.

THE COURT: Is that document filed in the Court record?

MR. STEPANS: I do not believe it is, Your Honor.

The quote is -- the excerpts are via Mr. Adams' affidavit and our supplement, so these excerpts -- I'm going to go a little beyond it, if that's okay with Your Honor, it's to continue this sentence. Okay.

Under -- this is page 26 and the heading is, "Use of

Religious Corporations. It has proved to be the course of wisdom for the faithful slave to organize certain corporations that are recognized by the laws of various countries. These religious corporations own and operate printing facilities that produce and distribute Bibles and Bible literature on a worldwide basis for use in the Kingdom Ministry.

"The first in time and the principal corporation used in this way is the *Watchtower* Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. The *Watchtower* Society has extended its works worldwide, establishing branch offices in various countries.

"Also in compliance with local government regulations, a number of other religious societies have been legally formed, such as Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York and the International Bible Students Association.

"All these legal instrumentalities cooperate with one another. These and other legal corporations are used by the modern-day governing body of Jehovah's Witnesses to facilitate the preaching of the good news worldwide and care of the spiritual needs."

Your Honor, in 1986, Mr. Adams asserts to the Court, unequivocally, that that's the hierarchal structure of this organization, that WTPA is the first in line, that all of them look to WTPA. Those are the assertions from Mr. Adams. He's quoting from the material that we have asserted is exactly the basis for the jurisdiction -- for jurisdiction to be

appropriate.

As it pertains to Rule 11, Your Honor, and the request for sanctions, I have to be honest, I did not -- I told Your Honor that I don't like to be in here on discovery disputes, and I think you may at some point not believe me because here we are again.

But in a situation such as this, where we are so reliant on the good faith of defendants to come forward with this information where they have asked this Court to rely on these affidavits, without question, in order to dismiss the case, prevent us from doing discovery, and finding these facts, it's my position that as a result of that -- because they ask the Court to do that, because they obstructed discovery, because we're 18 months in, that I don't know what the proper sanction would be exactly, but I am in a position to come here and ask the Court whether it is appropriate because based on everything that I've seen, it can only be recklessness or bad faith that leads us to where we're at right now as opposed to getting ready for trial.

So with respect, Your Honor, and subject to any other questions, I submit this to the Court reluctantly in this fashion, but without any other option as to how to know that we are going to be able to proceed in this case and rely on the representations that are made from these corporations.

Thank you.

1 THE COURT: Thank you. 2 Well, I will deem the motion submitted, and 3 Mr. Taylor's got his hand up again. 4 MR. TAYLOR: Your Honor, if I might have just two 5 minutes of the Court's time? 6 THE COURT: All right. Go ahead. 7 MR. TAYLOR: As Your Honor is aware, prior to the 8 current law firm representing the Pennsylvania corporation, 9 both corporations were represented by the same counsel. My 10 understanding is that the publications cited in the Don Adams' 11 affidavit were produced to plaintiffs' counsel, along with 12 about 70,000 other pages of documents. And to the uninformed, Mr. Adams' affidavit could be 13 14 misunderstood. Mr. Adams is talking about both about the 15 religious structure of the faith and also the corporate 16 structure. 17 In the religious structure of the faith, he 18 describes a hierarchy. And he says that "There is a religious 19 governing body which is not one in the same as the board of 20 directors." And then he also describes "branches which are 21 religious constructs, not corporate constructs." 22 Interestingly, if plaintiffs' counsel had kept

Interestingly, if plaintiffs' counsel had kept reading in the Don Adams' affidavit, it would explain in the very following paragraphs that the New York corporation is the corporation responsible for interaction with Jehovah's

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Witnesses in the United States. It's the very next paragraph in that affidavit, but he doesn't refer to it because it's inconvenient.

But it's distinction between the religious and corporate that it's confusing. And on behalf of the New York corporation, it has not contested jurisdiction, and indeed, the documents that were produced by the Hardin congregation, the actual congregation in Montana, all refer back to the New York corporation.

In fact, the letter that formed the corporation for the Hardin congregation is indeed a New York letterhead. It is not a Pennsylvania corporation. And so this confusion that arises between the religious construct and the corporate construct is why we have this confusion. Never has there ever been an attempt to engage in any bad faith, and certainly I have never made any representations to this Court other than the one that I'm making right now.

That's all I have to say, Your Honor. Thank you for hearing me.

THE COURT: Well, what difference would it make for personal jurisdiction of WTPA and this Court whether the contacts that WTPA had with the State of Montana were through some religious sort of structure or hierarchy or through a corporate structure?

MR. TAYLOR: In fact, Your Honor, it hasn't been

WTPA that's been having those contacts. The challenge that plaintiffs' counsel is trying to understand is where the Pennsylvania corporation sits. And it keeps referring to a hierarchy, but the hierarchy is not on the corporate side.

The hierarchy represents how the religion is structured, not how the corporation is structured, which is why the corporation records don't show anything to suggest that NY is a subsidiary, a child, or a parent for any corporate relationship between the entities because none exist.

And so it is -- that's in part, Your Honor, why the motion was withdrawn. We understand that when you are looking at a religion and then these corporations, it is entirely confusing. It's understood. But we would be pleased to have the opportunity to bring these facts to bear through deposition and discovery, and then the Court can assess it at the conclusion of discovery to see whether or not Pennsylvania has any contacts, meaningful contacts, with any congregation in Montana let alone the allegations related to the complaints at issues here.

THE COURT: Well, there would be no need for that, the motion has been withdrawn, so there'd be no need for further discovery on it. I don't know that you answered my question, particularly, Mr. Taylor, about what difference it would make whether WTPA had influence over, for example, the

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Hardin congregation with regard to religious sort of
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     activities or through some more corporate kind of aspect as
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     far as jurisdiction goes.
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                     TAYLOR: To be clear, Your Honor, the
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      Pennsylvania corporation had no religious authority, control,
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      influence over the Hardin congregation to the extent one would
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      argue, and I would rebut that argument, that the
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     Pennsylvania -- or the New York corporation had that
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     relationship, I think those facts would be borne out during
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     discovery.
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                THE COURT: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Taylor.
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                Mr. Stepans, did you have anything you wish to say
     with regard to Mr. Taylor's comments?
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                MR. STEPANS: No, I don't believe so, Your Honor.
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     Thank you.
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                THE COURT: All right. Okay. So I think everyone's
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     had an opportunity to be heard, I hope so. So as I was
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      saying, the Court will deem the motions for sanctions in these
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     two cases submitted for ruling.
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                And thank you, Counsel. We're adjourned.
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           (Whereupon, the proceedings adjourned at 10:44 a.m.)
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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I, Kim Marchwick, a Registered Professional Reporter and Certified Realtime Reporter, do hereby certify that the foregoing 47 pages of transcript is a true and correct record of the proceedings given at the time and place hereinbefore mentioned; that the proceedings were reported by me in machine shorthand and thereafter reduced to typewritten form using Computer-Aided Transcription; that after being reduced to typewritten form, a certified copy of this transcript will be filed electronically with the court.

I further certify that I am not an attorney for nor employed by, nor related to any of the parties or attorneys to this action, nor financially interested in this action.

Whereupon, this document was signed by me in Billings, Montana, this Friday, the 13th day of May, 2022.

/s/ Kim Marchwick

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